(ii) The quantity of sugar exported for commercial exports is treated as advance free sale release to be adjusted after a period of 12 months from the date of release.

(iii) The levy exemption on the quantity of sugar meant for commercial exports, if it cannot be availed by the sugar factory out of 1999-2000 seasons' production due to the completion of its levy obligation, may be availed by the sugar factory concerned, from the production in the ensuing sugar season.

(iv) Duty Entitlement Passbook (DEPB) at the rate of 5% of the F.O.B. value of exports of sugar has been allowed.

Violation of food laws by foreign food importers

4569. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the findings of a study sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture and conducted by a consumer rights organisation indicated gross violation of several food laws by foreign food import;

(b) if so, the salient points highlighted in the study report;

(c) whether the study report has revealed helpness of India's consumers due to lack of infrastructure to process complaints and prompt redressal of grievances of consumers in respect of goods imported from abroad;

(d) the steps being taken to provide more consumer courts even in smaller towns; and

(e) the action taken by Government to remove shortcomings in existing laws to prevent such violations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH): (a) The study conducted at the instance of Department of Food Processing Industries by consumer right organization has highlighted some violations of Indian food laws.

(b) The salient points highlighted by the Study are inadequate compliance with requirments like indication of the names of the ingredients used in the product or their composition by their weight or volume, non-supply of information like containing or otherwise of permitted natural/synthetic colurs and added flavours, date of expiry/ best before use, non-display of name of the Indian importer, non-display of maximum retail price, non-indication of the month and year of manufacture, non-provision of lot number and batch number and in some cases use of non-permitted colours, flavours and vegetable fats.

(c) The study was commissioned by the Government of India to assess level of compliance with domestic laws and does not therefore indicate helplessness of Indian consumer. The Consumer Protection Act contains adequate provisions empowering consumer redressal agencies to provide relief and redressals.

(d) The provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 empower the State Government, if it deems fit, to establish more than one District Forum in a District.

(e) Action for prosecution and providing relief to consumers like replacement of defective goods, imposing fines etc., are taken to ensure that violations of various provisions of the Laws are prevented. Further, Ministry of Commerce have issued directives for ensuring compliance with domestic laws like Weights and Measures, Orders under the Essential Commodities Act etc. by all importer of food items.

Trade and export-oriented Agriculture

†4570. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are trying to make Indian agriculture trade and export-oriented, under the pressure of World Trade Organisation; and

(b) if so, the details of the schemes prepared for this purpose?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.